“The knower’s perspective is essential in the pursuit of knowledge.” To what extent do you agree?

**Key words:** Do you agree? To what extent? Perspective. Pursuit of knowledge.

**AOKs:** Human sciences

**WOK:** Language, emotion, sense perception

**Knowledge issues:**

Does culture have an affect in how you think? If you have been brought up in more than one culture would you think any differently than if you were brought up in one culture?

**Assumptions:**

1. Subjective to each individual as everyone has different schemas based on their upbringing.
   1. Inuit study – they had a different perspective to snow than the average person because they grew up learning several different names to snow than any other culture.
2. The environment that they are in, and therefore their knowledge of things can also affect perspective. Depending on the community that the individual is in, the individual would always conform to behave a certain way to “fit in” with the others in fear of being out casted.
   1. Japanese women in an American household. Two interviews taken place several months apart. The conditions were exactly the same; the only difference was the language that the interview was conducted in. The first interview was conducted in English, and the second in Japanese. The findings consisted of the Japanese women giving more straightforward and open answers, much like the American culture, opposed to their much more conservative answers when the interview was conducted in Japanese.
   2. Perspective and knowledge changed when the language was changed.
3. “Fake it till you make it”
   1. Robert Zajonc showed that if you pronounced a certain alphabet that mimic some of the characteristics of a smile, such as a long “e” sound, which stretched the mouth outward. Other vowels tested such as the long “u” sound, forces the face to make a pouty expression. Participants reported feeling good after making the long “e” sound, and feeling bad after making the long “u” sound.
   2. Other studies showed that if you hold a pencil in your mouth horizontally so you stretch out your mouth outwards, you would feel happier just because your facial expression is forced to mimic smiling characteristics.
4. Plato’s cave:
   1. Imagine several prisoners who have been chained up in a cave for all of their lives. They have never been outside the cave. They face a wall in the cave and they can never look at the entrance of the cave. Sometimes animals, birds, people, or other objects pass by the entrance of the cave casting a shadow on the wall inside the cave. The prisoners see the shadows on the wall and mistakenly view the shadows as reality. However, one man breaks free from his chains and runs out of the cave. For the first time, he sees the real world and now knows that it is far beyond the shadows he had been seeing. He sees real birds and animals, not just shadows of birds and animals. This man is excited about what he sees and he goes back to his fellow prisoners in the cave to tell them about the real world. But to his astonishment, they don’t believe him. In fact, they are angry with him. They say the shadows are reality and that the escaped prisoner is crazy for saying otherwise.
   2. ANALOGY: According to Plato, the world outside the cave represents the world of forms while the shadows on the wall represent objects in the physical world. The escape of the prisoner represents philosophical enlightenment and the realization that forms are the true reality. Most people are like the prisoners in the cave. They think the shadows are reality. Philosophers, though, are like the man who escapes the cave and sees the real world. They have true knowledge.